

## Notification of reasons for refusal

Japanese Patent Application No.: 2001-071560

Date of Mailing: February 4, 2003

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Applicable Articles: § 29 (1) (iii), § 29 (2)

### Reasons for refusal

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1. The inventions concerning the following claims are rejected because they were described in the following publications distributed in Japan or elsewhere prior to the filing of the patent application or were made available to the public thorough electric communication line in Japan or elsewhere prior to the filing of the patent application, referring to § 29 (1) (iii).

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2. The inventions concerning the following claims are rejected because they were easily made, prior to the filing of the patent application, by a person with ordinary skill in the art to which the invention pertains, on the basis of an invention or inventions described in the following publications distributed in Japan or elsewhere prior to the filing of the patent application or made available to the public thorough electric communication line in Japan or elsewhere prior to the filing of the patent application, referring to § 29 (2).

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### Note

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- Claims 1, 2 and 4
- Reasons 1 and 2
- Cited references 1 and 2

#### Remarks

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The inventions concerning the claims 1, 2 and 4 of the application are disclosed in the prior arts described in the cited references 1 and 2.

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- Claim 3
- Reason 2
- Cited references 1 to 3

#### Remarks

Since the problem to keep out mold in a humidifying element is suggested at [0007] paragraph of the cited reference 3 and the technological idea for sterilizing water recirculating in a fuel cell so as to restrain microorganisms is suggested by the

cited references 1 and 2, it can be easy for an ordinary man to restrain microorganisms in humidifying water, too.

- Claims 5 to 7 and 10
- Reason 2
- Cited references 1 to 5

#### Remarks

Since there are disclosed that a sensor detect existence of microorganisms to control a time period for applying ultraviolet light in the cited references 4 and 5, it can be easy for an ordinary man to detect existence of microorganisms and control a time period for applying ultraviolet light in the cited references 1 and 2, too.

- Claim 8
- Reason 2
- Cited references 1 to 5

#### Remarks

It can be easy for an ordinary man to adjust frequency of a sterilizing treatment due to presence or absence of surplus electric power without creative ingenuity.

- Claim 9
- Reason 2
- Cited references 1 to 5

#### Remarks

Since there are disclosed such that propagation of microorganisms is induced within a temperature range preferable for the propagation of the microorganisms between 30 to 50 °C at [0005] paragraph of the cited reference 2, it can be easy for an ordinary man to provide a device for restraining propagation of microorganisms at a portion exhibiting a temperature preferable for the propagation of the microorganisms in the cited references 1 and 2.

### List of Cited References

1. Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication H09-063612
2. Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication H08-022833
3. Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication 2000-260447
4. Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication H07-008541
5. Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication S50-160096